

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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SELENDANG AYU

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INTERVIEW OF DECK CADET

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KARAN KOHLI

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An interview in the above entitled matter was held
on Sunday, December 12, 2004, before:

ROB JONES, NTSB

SEAN MCPHILAMY, USGC

CAPTAIN LEW KWOK YUE, IMC SHIPPING

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. JONES: This is an interview with Karan Kohli and you are the Deck Cadet aboard the Selendang Ayu?

MR. KOHLI: Yeah.

MR. JONES: Okay, What I would like to do is just ask you about the voyage starting from Seattle, your recollections of that and then leading up to the incident that resulted in the grounding, okay? And if you can speak clearly and slowly so that the tape recorder can hear that, we would appreciate it.

MR. KOHLI: Okay.

MR. JONES: And loudly.

MR. KOHLI: Okay.

MR. JONES: All right go ahead.

MR. KOHLI: Fine. Okay. You just ask, what exactly you are --

MR. JONES: Just, I am just going back a little ways to the trip from Seattle. Just your impression of the voyage and then up to, including the vessel going aground and you getting off the vessel.

MR. KOHLI: Okay, like, till, like, throughout the voyage, the voyage was okay. In between the weather was real tough and you see like you are always on the deck because you were loading soybean. So due to the water that goes inside we had put Ramnek tapes on to the cargo hatch. So due to,

1 like the wind was always more than like 40 or 50 knots like
2 that. So we always, due to those rough wind and weather, the
3 Ramniek tape used to come out so we were mostly on the deck
4 to heat the hatch and put the Ramnek back.

5 MR. JONES: And what is that exactly? Can you
6 describe that? What were you doing to the hatch?

7 MR. KOHLI: Oh, like the hatch is closed. We put
8 an extra lashing like you can say.

9 MR. JONES: Okay.

10 MR. KOHLI: We were putting the Ramnek tape, it's a
11 tape, it's rubber, which gets like, it gets sticking to the
12 hatch closings where any of the water can go inside.

13 MR. JONES: Okay.

14 MR. KOHLI: Like, like it is already closed but for
15 an extra precaution due to the rough weather. So due to the
16 winds and the water those things used to come out because the
17 weather was cold. It's usually like when it's a normal room
18 temperature type thing, then only it sticks up. Otherwise,
19 you would have to heat the surface and then stick it back.

20 MR. JONES: And who would you do that with?

21 MR. KOHLI: Like all the OS, bosun.

22 MR. JONES: Okay.

23 MR. KOHLI: ABs.

24 MR. JONES: Okay, all right. Proceed, thanks.

25 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, so till like, everyday it was

1 like the same thing we were on the deck and the weather was
2 so much that we, like sometimes we used to not work so much
3 like till we were working till 5'o clock. So due to the
4 rough weather and too much of the rolling continuously, knock
5 off by around like, sometimes after the lunch, it was
6 usually, all we used to come inside and clean the
7 accommodation and things like those and on the Monday, it was
8 like, we came to know it was, the engine stopped. But I did
9 not know, because we were on the deck only. I had no idea
10 about what were the reasons of our stopping.

11 MR. JONES: Okay.

12 MR. KOHLI: And then the other day, one of the tugs
13 came, I suppose Sidney Foss was the name of the tug. Then
14 we --

15 MR. JONES: In the afternoon?

16 MR. KOHLI: I do not have idea about that what time
17 it was. We got along the ropes, the one of the mooring line
18 of the Sidney Foss.

19 MR. JONES: Okay.

20 MR. KOHLI: We put plenty of the extra grease and
21 stuff for the lashing of the thing and in the morning I got
22 up. The boat said it will just move off as the
23 (Indiscernible) Island and she will proceed to the Dutch
24 Harbor till the weather gets more safer like around after 24
25 hours. For the time being, she will keep off the

1 (Indiscernible) Island. And in the morning, I got up. I
2 have a handy cam. I was just taking the picture of the
3 islands, the snow islands because long time I have not seen
4 that. So, by the time I just finished it and moved off and
5 we heard the news that the line has parted we went forward
6 and after that Alex Haley was there. They gave the line, the
7 small with the gunshot, they gave that line and they said,
8 they informed the Captain that they had a steering failure.
9 So, they went far off and the line parted and we were trying
10 for sometime that the line would come. Then I had some job I
11 went inside the accommodation. While going there I heard the
12 announcement that, Captain saying that, please proceed to the
13 port side and Captain called me up. I went up on the bridge,
14 I got all the documents, and he said as he was announcing and
15 he said that you leave the ship, on the port bow there is a
16 helicopter coming. Like when we were on the forward only,
17 then at that time the helicopter was trying to come down, but
18 not exactly it was down. Just keeps on moving. And I, like,
19 I was the second person to leave the ship.

20 MR. JONES: Then when you were helping to tie up
21 the Sidney Foss -

22 MR. KOHLI: Okay.

23 MR. JONES: Was that their line?

24 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, first we happen to throw our
25 heaving line to them and we had a --

1 MR. JONES: Messenger?

2 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, we gave the messenger to them and
3 the halfway they tied the messenger with their own line and
4 then we heaved it with the winches and we made it faster.

5 MR. JONES: The area that you were helping to
6 prevent chasing -

7 MR. KOHLI: Yeah.

8 MR. JONES: That was their mooring line.

9 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, they already had a big cloth tied
10 to their line but the line was like, that part was out of the
11 ship's side. So they, basically their idea was, when we put
12 the grease, it would come, it should not be chafed off and it
13 would be cleaned by that cloth but it was off, so we put
14 plenty of the grease that it does not get chafed off.

15 MR. JONES: Okay. You had heard that the mooring
16 line had parted?

17 MR. KOHLI: The next morning?

18 MR. JONES: Yeah. Did you ever see the remnants
19 that remained tied up on the bow?

20 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, the parted --

21 MR. JONES: The mooring line, the part of it.

22 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, yeah, we like, the messenger for
23 that line was on our ship only. The messenger for that tug,
24 the mooring rope. It was a long rope so it was on our ship
25 and the eye was also there, the other part has gone.

1 MR. JONES: Do you know how much from the eye
2 towards the Sidney Foss at where it parted? About how far
3 away?

4 MR. KOHLI: Basically how, like if that is the
5 Sidney Foss and this is the ship, the eye was here. We had
6 only the eye, I didn't know. It was not in my presence when
7 it parted.

8 MR. JONES: Okay.

9 MR. KOHLI: So it was like, we were like due to the
10 greasing and stuff, the Chief Officer has appointed all the
11 people to wait every 4 hours and put extra grease so that it
12 does not get chafed off. I don't know what was the time.

13 MR. JONES: So you can't tell whether it parted
14 where you were greasing it, where it was chafing or seaward
15 from there?

16 MR. KOHLI: I don't know about that.

17 MR. JONES: Okay, I don't want you to guess, just
18 if you know. Okay?

19 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, as I said, I was not there, I
20 don't know. We could see this the eye part, I don't where it
21 went off.

22 MR. JONES: Okay. You mentioned you were taking
23 pictures with a handy cam?

24 MR. KOHLI: Yeah.

25 MR. JONES: Do you still have that camera?

1 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, I have.

2 MR. JONES: And pictures?

3 MR. KOHLI: I have.

4 MR. JONES: Okay, we would like to maybe try to get
5 that if that would be possible. We will make a copy of it so
6 we could see what went on.

7 MR. KOHLI: Okay.

8 MR. JONES: Okay, it might help.

9 MR. KOHLI: The only pictures on that, it's like
10 the -- when the weather was rough, like you can see the water
11 coming on the ship beforehand, and other photographs are
12 taken, when I went on Alex Haley with all the Alex Haley
13 people, then with the help of them I just took my ship's
14 photo when I got onboard the Alex Haley.

15 MR. JONES: Okay, let's say, with the Alex Haley
16 and you were, you said you were the second one off your
17 vessel.

18 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, because the Chief Cook had some
19 problem in the leg, so I was there before, so I, like I
20 wanted him that he should go first as he--

21 MR. JONES: Okay.

22 MR. KOHLI: He had some problems so --

23 MR. JONES: And so this was the first helicopter
24 then to take few personnel off and that helicopter took you
25 to the Alex Haley.

1 MR. KOHLI: Alex Haley.

2 MR. JONES: Okay. You remained aboard until how
3 long?

4 MR. KOHLI: We remained till yesterday.

5 MR. JONES: Okay.

6 MR. KOHLI: Yesterday arrived around 11 o'clock.

7 MR. JONES: Was the trip good.

8 MR. KOHLI: They were excellent people, excellent
9 hospitality. They gave like whatever they were, like real
10 guest's things and everything.

11 MR. JONES: Good, that's nice to hear. Did you
12 participate in any of your ship's emergency drills?

13 MR. KOHLI: Yeah.

14 MR. JONES: Okay, can you describe that for me?

15 MR. KOHLI: The drills?

16 MR. JONES: Yeah, the drills.

17 MR. KOHLI: Okay, it's like we had fire fighting
18 drills. So the Captain gives the scenario, it's like two
19 times every month we have, because this time we are going to
20 Seattle. So we had plenty of times we had the drills. So in
21 the fire fighting, the Captain gives the scenario, I am in
22 the support party and I have the job to rig the hose and the
23 other people helping me out.

24 MR. JONES: Okay.

25 MR. KOHLI: So like, wherever this, my job is to

1 have a blanket at the fire, I just use the fire hose and give
2 a blanket of the water.

3 MR. JONES: How long have you been a Deck Cadet?

4 MR. KOHLI: I have been like, 21 months now.

5 MR. JONES: 21 months?

6 MR. KOHLI: This is my second ship.

7 MR. JONES: Okay, and are you going to an academy?

8 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, I have to finish three years of
9 training and like 36 months of sea time, then I have to go
10 for my academy.

11 MR. JONES: Okay, and what is the name of that
12 academy?

13 MR. KOHLI: It's like, it's not a particular or
14 fixed, I can go anywhere like, it's not, I am not, I had done
15 my pre-sea training but then after 36 months of sea time and
16 then I can go to any of the academy to go for my second man's
17 lessons.

18 MR. JONES: Okay. Would you say, your vessel, the
19 Captain well trained you?

20 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, absolutely. It's not like
21 sometimes people may say that, in our heart we think that in
22 the rough weather (Indiscernible) but I suppose that's the
23 best time because and actually those things can happen and
24 really it might have, this time it helped us like, if we got
25 so slag and things like it would not be so fast

1 (Indiscernible).

2 MR. JONES: Okay, so did you, you are talking about
3 drills with fire drill and scenarios, did you also abandon
4 ship drills?

5 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, plenty of times.

6 MR. JONES: Did you lower the boats?

7 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, we lowered the boats even we
8 lowered the boat in Seattle. Boats like, what we had, first
9 we lowered the boat at the starboard side because the port
10 side (Indiscernible) then later on what happened the shooters
11 has some, basically they had number 7 cargo hold division
12 first so we should take the boat out around 20 or 30 feet
13 off, so that time also we lowered the port side boat also we
14 lowered.

15 MR. JONES: Okay.

16 MR. KOHLI: We used to do the whole drills. My
17 job is to take out the cables and take out the aft drives and
18 secure rafts.

19 MR. JONES: Okay. Can I turn it over to Sean now?

20 MR. KOHLI: Yes, yes, sure.

21 MR. MCPHILAMY: Good afternoon, Karan. My name is
22 Sean McPhilamy with the United States Coast Guard. I would
23 like to just follow up with your observation when you were
24 directed to go forward to the helicopter.

25 MR. KOHLI: Okay.

1 MR. MCPHILAMY: Could you please describe for me
2 how you were told? Did you hear an announcement? Did you
3 have someone tell you personally?

4 MR. KOHLI: Okay, basically, I was coming my way
5 back to the accommodation. I was forward when that line
6 parted. The string line given by the Alex Haley will shoot
7 out of the gun thing and it came and when that parted, I came
8 back for some of my job. When I was coming back, I heard
9 Captain's announcement that there is a port side helicopter
10 being coming, so please leave the ship, and by the time I
11 came inside, there was another announcement for me to please
12 come on the bridge. So while I came up, the Captain said,
13 please come to my cabin and he gave me all the documents and
14 said, leave the ship. Despite given the announcement, I
15 heard the announcement first and then he gave an announcement
16 for me particularly to come to the bridge to take all the
17 documents. I did not have any of the time and things and
18 with this documents and I left the ship.

19 MR. MCPHILAMY: Clarify when the Captain made the
20 announcement for you to go for the helicopter, were the
21 people listed by name?

22 MR. KOHLI: No, it was like a general announcement
23 that on the port side there is a helicopter, please leave the
24 ship. Besides even when I was going up for the bridge, the
25 Captain kept on announcing means to go fast plenty of times

1 not a single time because it was, I heard my announcement
2 when I was going up and announcing this to leave the ship.

3 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you. After you received the
4 bag from the Captain from his state room and you had your
5 personal things --

6 MR. KOHLI: I did not had any personal things of
7 mine. I just went to my cabin and just, because the last
8 night I kept, the morning I kept my handy cam on the bed. I
9 just picked up my ring and one jacket and that's it. I just
10 did not have anything else and just because he said I was
11 wearing a very dirty boiler suit and he said you can change
12 that in a second and I just changed that. Like he said you
13 come to my cabin. That was like, while going to his cabin I
14 just took a shirt moving from his cabin to the bridge, I took
15 a shirt and went up and (Indiscernible).

16 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you. From that point, after
17 you had obtained these things and you went forward port side.
18 Where you first, last, middle of the group to arrive?

19 MR. KOHLI: I was the first one to arrive at that
20 place and by the time I had Chief Cook, the Mess Boy and one
21 of the oilers with us. I stood standby and let the Chief
22 Cook go (Indiscernible) the people were coming.

23 MR. MCPHILAMY: Did you see the helicopter, had it
24 arrived?

25 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, because we were on the forward

1 station, so it was already there just moving around somewhere
2 in the forward or near way. He landed first like it was the
3 port bow. He was just moving up and down there or some times
4 on the forward part, like that. In between, he went to the
5 Alex Haley on the halfway and then he came back.

6 MR. MCPHILAMY: When the helicopter came overhead
7 and the group of people was assembled, were all 9 of you
8 there?

9 MR. KOHLI: No.

10 MR. MCPHILAMY: So just--?

11 MR. KOHLI: It's like, as I said that when I was
12 there, me and the 3 people and people were coming.

13 MR. MCPHILAMY: More people coming. Yeah.

14 MR. KOHLI: So as like we the 9 people went, there
15 were more people, but the helicopter people said that only 9
16 people. So they stood there.

17 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you. Did the helicopter
18 lower anything to the deck of the ship?

19 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, the basket.

20 MR. MCPHILAMY: Was anything else in the basket?

21 MR. KOHLI: Nothing.

22 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you. After, the Chief Cook
23 got into the basket and was taken, was there any concern did
24 it seem this is an unusual event --

25 MR. KOHLI: Exactly.

1 MR. MCPHILAMY: Was there concern voiced by people,
2 was their discussion about how to do what this was, was there
3 communication?

4 MR. KOHLI: No, nothing. That time it was, as you
5 can understand, it was really hell of thing. People just
6 wanted to move off and move off in the sense that there was
7 no time for talking and the stuff, you know just get into
8 basket, the basket is coming, the people moving off.

9 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you.

10 MR. KOHLI: I don't think so people may be talking
11 anything else other than moving off and that's it. Danger
12 you know. As we learned like it. Even in our drills we are
13 not allowed to talk to each other. It is like, precisely you
14 have do whatever your duty is and that is.

15 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you. Did 9 of you get into
16 the same helicopter and at that point to the Helicopter leave
17 towards the Alex Haley?

18 MR. KOHLI: Yeah.

19 MR. MCPHILAMY: How did you get off the Helicopter?

20 MR. KOHLI: By the basket itself. They first tie
21 the belt or something, they lower that belt to the down
22 people and then they lifted the basket up only, then they had
23 the basket with the chain so that both the people are
24 holding.

25 But I just want to ask the Coast Guard one

1 question. I asked the Alex Haley too. As you said, you are
2 just asking the questions. I want to take a question on to
3 you, the rescue thing. You people, as they, like I was on
4 the Alex Haley I just, as you, I heard the news now and
5 things that 24 hours the helicopters were moving and this and
6 that. I was not able see the 24 hours things. I just in the
7 half midway there may be one of those the A16 you call those
8 plane that was there or sometimes the helicopter was there,
9 but not the 24 hours and in between there was only one tug
10 there in this like, the next day, like, I suppose Thursday it
11 was, the next day, Thursday, because that time is evening.
12 The next we went on the bridge to take the snaps.

13 I saw just only one tug and you people say the
14 rescue, how do you manage like, you are giving in the paper
15 that 3 hours of the time is for the life of the people and
16 you are were not helping the people. The rescue should be
17 full fledged you know. I asked the Alex Haley people. They
18 said the fuel and thing and that. But if you are the rescue
19 people you should get fuel and every damn thing so that the
20 people may be saved off. It is not that how far it may be no
21 problems. If you are taking that responsibility of this
22 rescue and search and rescue. So you should be full fledged
23 on that. How do you explain on that thing now?

24 MR. MCPHILAMY: I certainly welcome your question.

25 MR. KOHLI: Yeah.

1 MR. MCPHILAMY: I apologize, I can't answer the
2 question.

3 MR. KOHLI: It is not a part of apologizing, you
4 know, it's a part of people's life, which have gone. Who is
5 responsible for -- I just evoke that. Who is responsible for
6 that? You just asking for the apologizing thing, but they
7 want answer on many things you know?

8 MR. MCPHILAMY: It is okay, Karan, and we
9 understand your question, I appreciate that, in fact at the
10 end of the interview we will open it up through a question
11 from you or what do you like to say--

12 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, basically he was my Chief Officer
13 and really very close people you know and they are just gone
14 and like, as the same way we found the helicopter lying on
15 the, I have seen the photograph far more further than the
16 people you have, speak of this photo which is lying on the
17 beach of this island. Even I suppose there was no, you
18 people are like experts in risks, the swimmers and divers but
19 they wouldn't send any swimmers and divers. The Alex Haley
20 people went with the small boats there to just search. They
21 were not like when that area was clear it was on the last day
22 when we went off like, they were relieved from the duty. You
23 may (Indiscernible). So that day the weather was clear.
24 They went on the small boats to just look out, but there
25 weren't any divers or things with them, so that they can go

1 down. The weather was not so much that day like rough, the
2 people could go down and check it out.

3 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you very much for this
4 interview. I do not have any further questions.

5 MR. KOHLI: Yes, I --

6 MR. JONES: (Indiscernible)

7 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, yes, plus that, everyone was
8 wearing a life jacket.

9 MR. JONES: Thank you. Okay, thanks.

10 CAPTAIN LEW: I just want to ask you, when you are
11 working inside the accommodation during the rough weather
12 condition, you heard any abnormal noise or anything that is
13 coming?

14 MR. KOHLI: No, sir.

15 CAPTAIN LEW: Nothing else. Okay, on the wait for
16 the evacuation site and when you are making the proceeding
17 towards the deck side, towards on the port side, did you hear
18 like any gush of air coming up from the (Indiscernible) tanks
19 or ballast tanks or (Indiscernible)?

20 MR. KOHLI: No, sir. Nothing else as such.

21 CAPTAIN LEW: Okay, so during all this, you heard
22 that the vessel has broken down. The engine is broke down
23 itself. Were you given any job finally that at that period,
24 you know (Indiscernible).

25 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, basically I was always on the

1 forward side.

2 CAPTAIN LEW: Forward side?

3 MR. KOHLI: Forward, Forward.

4 CAPTAIN LEW: Forecastle.

5 MR. KOHLI: Forecastle.

6 CAPTAIN LEW: Forecastle, what were you doing
7 there?

8 MR. KOHLI: Due to the weather was really rough and
9 the lines like, it, because as I earlier said and the Alex
10 Haley when it, the steering failure it went really far off so
11 you need a long heaving line, so like half of the peoples
12 were always there, I was always with the Chief Officer and
13 like when throwing the heaving lines and thing.

14 CAPTAIN LEW: Okay. Nothing more.

15 MR. JONES: How long have you been onboard--?

16 MR. KOHLI: Selendeng Ayu?

17 MR. JONES: Yes.

18 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, this was my 11th month. I came
19 on 1st February.

20 MR. JONES: And how much longer were you going to
21 be onboard before released?

22 MR. KOHLI: Till January end. I have to finish
23 like I was planning to do, as I earlier said I have 36 months
24 in my other ship, by the 12 months, (Indiscernible) may be
25 like January ending.

1 MR. JONES: And as the Deck Cadet, what did you do
2 during the course of the day? Your duties other than helping
3 the bosun with the rough weather?.

4 MR. KOHLI: Yeah. My job is basically from
5 basically from 8:00 to 5:00 on the deck and then 8:00 to
6 10:00 on the bridge.

7 MR. JONES: At night?

8 MR. KOHLI: At night.

9 MR. JONES: And you would assist with the--?

10 MR. KOHLI: Third Officer.

11 MR. JONES: Okay, and he helped train you in
12 navigation duties or what were your duties on the bridge with
13 the Third Officer?

14 MR. KOHLI: Lookout, steering.

15 MR. JONES: Were you steering during the rough
16 weather?

17 MR. KOHLI: No.

18 MR. JONES: No?

19 MR. KOHLI: As I also said that the work was so
20 much, sometimes like putting the Ramniek tapes and the
21 whether was really rough, so we used to stay down better not
22 going on the bridge for the time. In between we went but we
23 were not steering because of rough, in that particular place
24 if you change in the course of things. It moves very fast,
25 better put it on the autopilot.

1 MR. JONES: Could you spell that type of tape
2 Ramniek tape?

3 MR. KOHLI: It's R-A-M-N-I-E-K.

4 MR. JONES: It was the tape you were using to seal
5 up?

6 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, it's basically meant for when we,
7 any of the ship loaded, food grades.

8 MR. JONES: Okay.

9 MR. KOHLI: Like basically once hatch goes up and
10 hatch door closes it seals. It has inside, it is a McGregor
11 company. It seals off but still you have some like, the
12 water doesn't go but like, when like, you can say if there
13 are two metal pieces, like two part of them is closed and
14 down you have a rubber closing --

15 MR. JONES: Right.

16 MR. KOHLI: There won't be water going, like if the
17 water goes inside, slips off from that rubber part. But for
18 an extra precaution we just sealed it off all places.

19 MR. JONES: Okay. That's all I have. I just like
20 the further questions, Sean?

21 MR. MCPHILAMY: No, thank you.

22 MR. JONES: Captain Lew?

23 CAPTAIN LEW: No.

24 MR. JONES: Okay, all right. Thanks a lot, Karan.

25 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, sure.

1 MR. JONES: I appreciate.

2 MR. KOHLI: Yeah, thank you.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

DEPOSITION SERVICES, INC., hereby certifies that the attached pages represent an accurate transcript of the electronic sound recording of the proceedings of the National Transportation Safety Board Interview regarding the grounding of the Selendang Ayu on December 9, 2004.

INTERVIEW OF DECK CADET KARAN KOHLI

Susan S., Transcriber